

## The Tower

By Libbie Churms

I never really knew much about it . It was just there, up high in the cathedral spookily looming over us .Watching us. My friends at school made up stories about it, that it was haunted by a ghost of a young girl who disappeared years ago and was never seen again .

One day in early June, our school went on a tour of the cathedral. My friends and I messed around, telling the same old ghost story. We needn't have bothered - no one believed us anymore .

The over-friendly guide took us around the many grand rooms, explaining what the rooms were used for and the origin of each. Meanwhile the teachers fussed around the little ones: zipping up coats; tying shoe laces. They didn't bother with us older ones so some of the year six boys just wandered off in groups saying they 'were going to find some fun'. [To be honest ,I was quite interested in the cathedrals history and all the different twists and turns that led around the building-even if everyone else wasn't.]

When we were all settled down for lunch and the wayward gang of boys had returned, I headed off to find the toilets. But I was side tracked by the intricate stained glass windows as well as the magnificent stone statues and arches that decorated the many corridors and rooms. They were beautiful, delicately patterned showing stories from the bible. I stared at them transfixed. Then I had thought about the story. I mustn't get distracted I had told myself - no matter how beautiful this place was. I remember how the guide had told us that yes, someone might have gone missing here once, it was a big place, but no, it was nothing to worry about .

I relaxed then, following the windows pattern until I reached the end, accidentally taking a wrong turn in the process...

At first I didn't really notice. However, when I did, I searched around frantically for the sign labelled toilets. I wandered around hopelessly, my mind and heart racing.

Deciding that it was best to just try and find my way back I crept along the corridor and up an endless staircase. I counted 216 steps. On each one my foot sounded as loud as a jackhammer. I reached a locked door. Twisting the handle and fiddling with the lock wouldn't budge the door. I turned the handle and shoved myself up against the door. It flung open revealing a dusty room with mosaic flooring filled with old church supplies : candles; tattered bibles; old altar covers and prayer beads were scattered across the floor. There were stone angels looming from the ceiling. It looked as if it had once been used as an extra prayer room. There was a girl, about my age, stood in the centre of the room. She looked as startled as a rabbit caught in the headlights.

" You're not...? " I stammered.

"Georgia Roberts, missing person ? "she smiled and tossed back her long white blonde hair. My mouth fell open. My throat went dry.

" But Georgia Roberts went missing 10 years ago... You mean you're... "

" A ghost ? " There was a twinkle in her pale ice -blue eyes.

I never found my way back, all those years ago. Neither did Georgia. Since then I've seen hundreds of missing posters stuck up around town. Missing posters for me.

Every day, I stand by the small window, surveying the distance. Seeing but never to be seen ...